

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 18-22 and enter new claims 23-41.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 18-22 (canceled)

Claim 23 (new): A temporary filter guidewire comprising:

an elongate flexible guidewire having a proximal end and a guidewire distal region;
a generally tubular, self-expanding filter mounted coaxially about the guidewire, the filter having distal and proximal ends slidably disposed about the guidewire distal region;
a stop element fixed to the guidewire between the filter distal and proximal ends, the stop element obstructing movement of the filter distal and proximal ends along the guidewire;

a tubular actuator fixed to the proximal end of the filter, the actuator forming an annular space around the guidewire and being slidably disposed there along; and

an elongate hollow rod slidably and removably disposed about the guidewire and having a rod distal end releasably engageable with the tubular actuator, the hollow rod being operable, when the rod distal end is so engaged and in response to applying a first degree of proximally directed force to the hollow rod, to withdraw the filter along the guidewire until the filter distal end contacts the stop element and to further withdraw the filter proximal end to separate the filter distal and proximal ends, thus transforming the filter from a deployed configuration to a collapsed configuration.

Claim 24 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 23 wherein the hollow rod is further operable, in response to applying a second, higher degree of proximally directed force to the rod, to disengage the hollow rod from the tubular actuator, such that the hollow rod can be removed from the guidewire and the filter is free to expand itself.

Claim 25 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 23 wherein the hollow rod is

operable to engage the rod distal end with the tubular actuator by compression of the tubular actuator between the rod distal end and the stop element.

Claim 26 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 25 wherein compression of the tubular actuator between the rod distal end and the stop element causes frictional engagement between the rod distal end and a tapered proximal end of the tubular actuator.

Claim 27 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 23 wherein the stop element comprises a tube.

Claim 28 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 27 further comprising a coiled tension spring mounted about the stop element and the guidewire, the spring having distal and proximal ends fixed to the filter distal and proximal ends, respectively.

Claim 29 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 23 wherein the stop element comprises a coiled spring having at least one turn fixed to the guidewire.

Claim 30 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 23 wherein the hollow rod comprises an elongate, wire-like proximal shaft and a relatively short tubular distal section.

Claim 31 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 23 wherein the self-expanding filter comprises braided multiple filaments.

Claim 32 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 31 wherein at least one of the braided filaments comprises a radiopaque material.

Claim 33 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 31 wherein at least one of the braided filaments comprises a wire having an inner core of a first material surrounded by an outer layer of a second material.

Claim 34 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 33 wherein one of the first and second materials is radiopaque and the other of the first and second materials is relatively non-radiopaque.

Claim 35 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 34 wherein the wire is formed by a drawn-filled-tube process.

Claim 36 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 35 wherein the first material is an alloy comprising 90% platinum and 10% nickel, and wherein the second material is nitinol.

Claim 37 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 23 further comprising a mechanism for damping the relative longitudinal movement between the distal and proximal ends of the filter.

Claim 38 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 37 wherein the annular space is capable of containing a volume of bodily fluid to effectuate the mechanism for damping.

Claim 39 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 37 wherein the mechanism for damping comprises a viscous material being applied to the actuator and/or the guidewire to at least partially fill the annular space there between.

Claim 40 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 38 wherein the mechanism for damping comprises a distal opening of the actuator being funnel-shaped such that distal movement of the actuator through bodily fluid collects and forces the fluid into the annular space.

Claim 41 (new): The temporary filter guidewire of claim 37 wherein the mechanism for damping further comprises the actuator and the distal end of the hollow rod being designed and arranged such that the releasable engagement there between is effectuated by applying a partial vacuum through the lumen of the hollow rod, whereby controllably releasing the partial vacuum slowly disengages the distal end of the hollow rod from the tubular actuator.